# The Utilization of The Word Find Application to Improve Students' English Vocabulary Mastery."

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**Abstrack**

This researcher investigated the improvement of students' English vocabulary mastery before and after using the Word Find application. (i) The purpose of this study was to determine whether the use of the Word Find application can improve the vocabulary mastery (ii) of eighth grade students at SMPN 5 Alla Redak after being treated through the application. This research employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design (one-group pre-test and post-test). The subjects were 26 eighth-grade students of SMPN 5 Alla Redak. The instruments of this research were a pre-test and a post-test, designed in the form of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions.The data were analyzed using percentage calculation and t-test. The results revealed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after the use of the Word Find application, as the mean score of the post-test was higher than that of the pre-test. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Word Find application was effective as a learning medium in improving students' English vocabulary mastery.

***Keywords:*** *Learning Medium,Vocabulary Mastery,Word Find.*

## INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most important subjects taught in schools because of its status as an international language and its role as a means of global communication. Mastery of English is essential not only for academic achievement but also for preparing students to participate in a globalized world. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—vocabulary mastery plays a fundamental role, as it provides the building blocks for effective communication. Without an adequate vocabulary, students face difficulties in expressing ideas, understanding texts, and interacting in both spoken and written communication.

However, in the real context of junior high school, many students still encounter serious challenges in vocabulary learning. Their vocabulary knowledge is often limited, leading to difficulties in comprehension and communication. This limited mastery also impacts students' motivation, as they feel discouraged when they are unable to follow lessons or understand reading materials. Traditional teaching methods, which often rely heavily on lectures and rote memorization, contribute to this problem. Such approaches fail to actively engage students, making the learning process monotonous and less meaningful. As a result, vocabulary mastery becomes uneven, with some students able to memorize certain words temporarily but failing to use them accurately in real communication.

To address these challenges, teachers need to explore alternative strategies and innovative learning media. One promising approach is the integration of game-based learning into the English classroom. Game-based learning emphasizes meaningful engagement by combining educational content with interactive and enjoyable activities. Research has shown that the use of games in language learning can increase students' motivation, foster collaboration, and provide opportunities for practice in a contextualized and less stressful environment. Games also allow learners to retain vocabulary more effectively because they learn through repetition, competition, and active participation.

In this regard, the use of digital applications as learning media has gained attention. Among them, the Word Find application is particularly suitable for vocabulary learning. Word Find provides students with an interactive platform to identify and locate words based on definitions, clues, or meanings. This activity not only strengthens students' understanding of word meanings but also trains them in spelling, pronunciation, and usage. For instance, when searching for words, students must pay attention to the arrangement of letters, which indirectly improves their spelling accuracy. Once words are identified, teachers can guide students to pronounce them correctly, thereby improving pronunciation. Furthermore, students can be encouraged to use the words in meaningful sentences, which supports the practical application of vocabulary.

The use of Word Find also aligns with the principles of student-centered learning and the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes active participation, creativity, and contextual learning. By incorporating technology and interactive media, students are not only exposed to vocabulary in a more enjoyable way but are also provided with meaningful experiences that connect learning to real communication. Such an approach is expected to reduce students' boredom, increase their interest, and significantly improve their vocabulary mastery.

Several previous studies support the effectiveness of game-based learning for vocabulary acquisition. Musmuliadi (2024) demonstrated that using Word Brain games helped junior high school students improve their English vocabulary by providing an enjoyable and competitive environment. Similarly, Salsabila (2022) reported that the application of Word Square and Scramble Sentence models in elementary schools assisted students in discovering and arranging new vocabulary correctly, while Nguyen (2021) found that cooperative vocabulary games increased university students' motivation and provided meaningful contexts for practice. These findings suggest that word-based games, whether traditional or digital, play a significant role in enhancing students' vocabulary learning outcomes.

Based on these considerations, this study focuses on utilizing the Word Find application as a digital learning medium to improve the vocabulary mastery of eighth-grade students at SMPN 5 Alla Redak. By implementing this application, the researcher expects to provide evidence of how digital game-based learning can contribute to better vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question of whether the Word Find application is effective in improving students' English vocabulary mastery and to what extent it can enhance their learning outcomes.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Participant

The participants of this research were eighth-grade students of SMPN 5 Alla Redak in the academic year 2024/2025. From the overall population of eighth graders, one class consisting of 26 students was selected as the sample of the study. The selection of participants was conducted through purposive sampling. This technique was chosen because the class selected had been identified, based on initial observation and interviews with the English teacher, as experiencing significant difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. Such a condition made the class suitable as a research sample, since it represented the real problem that the study intended to address.

The 26 students involved in this research varied in terms of language proficiency, learning motivation, and prior exposure to vocabulary learning strategies. Most of them relied heavily on traditional methods of memorization and translation, which often led to boredom and low retention. During the preliminary observation, it was also found that students' vocabulary mastery was relatively low, as reflected in their difficulties in understanding word meanings, spelling, pronunciation, and applying vocabulary in sentences. This justified the need for more interactive and engaging learning media.

By selecting this group of students, the researcher intended to provide an equal learning opportunity for all participants to improve their vocabulary through the use of the Word Find application. All students participated actively in both the pre-test and the post-test, as well as in the treatment sessions using the application. The participation of these 26 students was essential to generate valid and reliable data for measuring the effectiveness of the Word Find application in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.

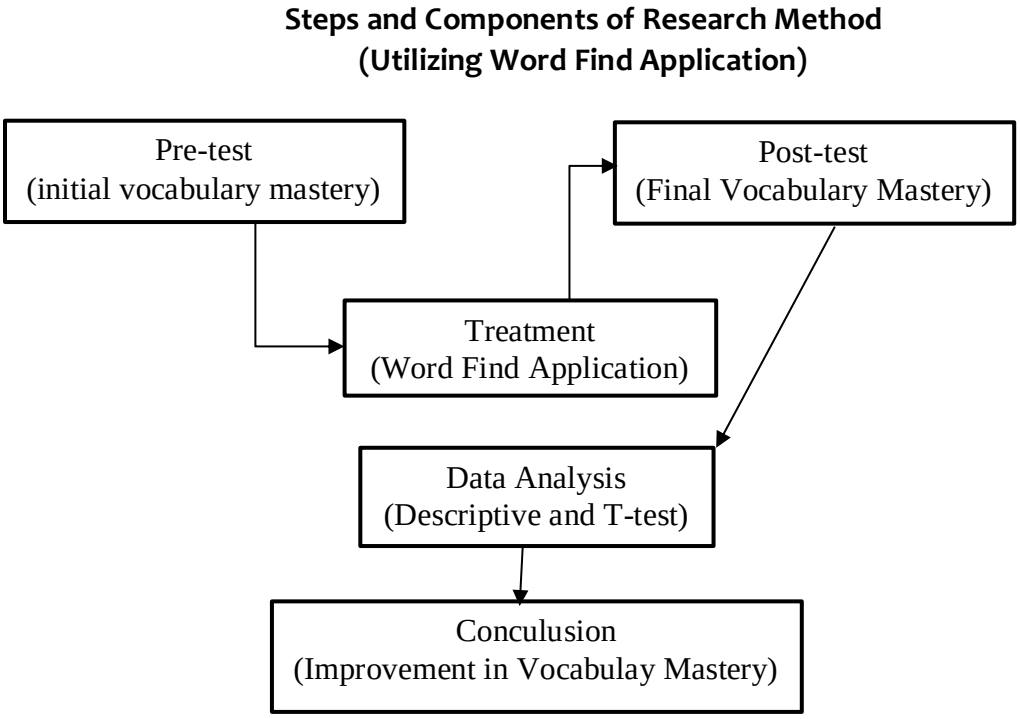
**Course Description**

This study was designed using a quantitative research approach with a pre-experimental method, specifically employing the one-group pre-test and post-test design. Therefore, this approach was considered suitable for investigating the improvement of students' English vocabulary mastery after using the *Word Find* application. Unlike qualitative research, which focuses on describing lived experiences, quantitative research enables the researcher to measure students' achievement systematically through pre-test and post-test scores. This design was chosen because it allowed the researcher to determine whether there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery before and after the treatment.

The one-group pre-test and post-test design involves a single group of participants who are tested twice: once before the treatment (pre-test) and once after the treatment (post-test). In this study, the participants were 26 eighth-grade students at SMPN 5 Alla Redak. The pre-test was conducted to measure students' initial vocabulary mastery, while the post-test was administered to evaluate the progress made after learning with the *Word Find* application. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores served as the basis for determining the effectiveness of the treatment. After determining the research design, the next essential step was to establish the procedures for data collection and analysis. The instruments of this study consisted of a pre-test and a post-test, both designed in the form of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. These instruments were developed to measure four indicators of vocabulary mastery: meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and usage. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation) to describe the students' performance, and inferential statistics through the paired sample t-test to examine whether the differences between the pre-test and post-test were statistically significant.

The use of this analysis technique was considered appropriate because descriptive statistics provided an overview of students' general achievement, while the t-test gave empirical evidence of whether the observed improvement was significant. This process enabled the researcher to draw accurate conclusions about the effectiveness of the *Word Find* application in enhancing students' English vocabulary mastery. By combining systematic testing and statistical analysis, the study ensured that its findings were both reliable and valid, contributing valuable insights into the use of game-based learning media in language education. This model is considered appropriate for managing data from the pre-test, treatment with the Word Find application, and post-test, ensuring that the analysis remains focused on the research objective of improving students' vocabulary mastery.

Figure 1. Steps and components of data analysis in research using the Word Find application




As the initial stage of data analysis in this study, the process of data reduction was carried out to simplify and focus the data obtained from students' pre-test and post-test results. At this stage, the raw scores of students were processed and categorized based on the indicators of vocabulary mastery, namely *meaning*, *spelling*, *pronunciation*, and *usage*. This approach aimed to facilitate the researcher in systematically identifying consistent patterns of improvement in students' vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, the reduced data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were employed to present the mean score, minimum score, maximum score, and standard deviation in order to provide a general overview of students' performance. Meanwhile, the paired sample t-test was applied to determine the significance of the difference between pre-test and post-test scores, thus offering empirical evidence of the improvement in vocabulary mastery after the use of the *Word Find* application.

Therefore, the data analysis framework adopted in this study is considered capable of producing valid, reliable, and relevant findings. Each stage, from data collection and reduction to statistical analysis, was designed to maintain a strong connection between the empirical data and the research conclusions. This approach ensured that the findings

genuinely reflected the impact of utilizing the *Word Find* application on enhancing junior high school students' vocabulary mastery.

**Instrument**

In this research, the main instruments used for data collection were a pre-test and a post-test, both designed to measure the students' English vocabulary mastery. These instruments were carefully constructed to align with the objectives of the study and to assess vocabulary knowledge comprehensively across four key indicators: meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and usage. By employing these indicators, the instruments were expected to provide a holistic picture of the students' vocabulary mastery before and after the treatment. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the study to obtain baseline data on the students' initial vocabulary mastery. The test consisted of two types of items: multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank exercises. The multiple-choice questions required students to select the correct word based on its meaning or definition, while the fill-in-the-blank items asked them to complete sentences with appropriate vocabulary. These formats were chosen because they not only measure recognition and recall of words but also assess the students' ability to use vocabulary in context. The pre-test thus provided an overview of the students' strengths and weaknesses in understanding word meanings, spelling words correctly, pronouncing them appropriately, and applying them in sentences.

The post-test was given after the treatment, which involved the use of the Word Find application in vocabulary learning. The post-test had the same structure and level of difficulty as the pre-test to ensure comparability of results. It consisted of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions covering the same indicators. Administering the same types of items allowed the researcher to directly measure the extent of improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after the intervention.

The test items for both pre-test and post-test were developed by the researcher and validated through expert judgment. Two English education lecturers reviewed the test items to ensure content validity, clarity of instructions, appropriateness of vocabulary level, and alignment with the research objectives. Based on their feedback, revisions were made to improve the quality of the items, such as adjusting the level of difficulty, refining distractors in multiple-choice items, and clarifying sentence contexts in fill-in-the-blank tasks. This process was crucial to guarantee that the tests accurately measured what they were intended to assess.

In addition, the reliability of the test instruments was established through a pilot test conducted with a group of students from another class who were not part of the research sample. The results of the pilot test were analyzed using statistical measures of internal consistency to ensure that the instruments produced stable and consistent results. Only after the instruments demonstrated sufficient validity and reliability were they administered to the actual research participants.

Therefore, the combination of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions in both pre-test and post-test provided reliable data on students' vocabulary mastery. These instruments were essential for comparing students' performance before and after the

implementation of the Word Find application and for drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of this learning medium in improving vocabulary mastery.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research were obtained from the analysis of students' pre-test and post-test results. The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to determine the students' initial vocabulary mastery, while the post-test was given after the implementation of the Word Find application. The purpose of these tests was to measure whether there was a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after using the application.

The pre-test results revealed that most students were categorized as very poor and poor, with only a few achieving the fair category. None of the students reached the good or very good categories. This indicates that before the treatment, students still faced serious difficulties in mastering vocabulary. They struggled with understanding word meanings, writing correct spelling, pronouncing words properly, and applying vocabulary in sentences. The descriptive statistical analysis showed that the mean score of the pre-test was 65.38, with a relatively wide gap between the minimum and maximum scores. This variation reflected uneven vocabulary mastery among students.

After the implementation of the Word Find application during the treatment sessions, the post-test results demonstrated a significant improvement. The mean post-test score increased to 87.50, placing most students in the good category, with several even achieving the very good category. Importantly, no student remained in the very poor category. This improvement confirmed that the use of the Word Find application provided students with a more engaging, enjoyable, and meaningful vocabulary learning experience.

The results of the t-test analysis further supported these findings. The calculated t-value was higher than the critical t-value at a 0.05 significance level, indicating that there was a statistically significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test scores. This proves that the Word Find application was effective in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.

The findings of this research highlight the effectiveness of the Word Find application as an interactive learning medium in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test indicates that the integration of game-based learning tools can create a positive learning environment that motivates students and enhances their performance.

Firstly, the application successfully improved students' ability to connect words with their meanings. As noted in the pre-test, many students initially struggled to identify correct word definitions. However, after practicing with the Word Find application, students became more accustomed to associating words with their meanings, which contributed to their increased vocabulary mastery.

Secondly, the activity of searching for words within the application indirectly trained students in spelling. Since they had to pay close attention to each letter to find the target words, their awareness of correct spelling improved. This was confirmed in the post-test results, where students performed better in spelling-related items compared to the pre-test.

Thirdly, the practice of pronouncing words after finding them in the game enhanced students' pronunciation skills. By repeating words modeled by the teacher or the audio provided,

students developed greater confidence and accuracy in pronouncing vocabulary items. This aspect was crucial because pronunciation is often overlooked in vocabulary learning, yet it plays a significant role in oral communication.

Finally, students' ability to apply vocabulary in sentences also improved. The Word Find application encouraged them not only to recognize words but also to use them in context. This was evident in the post-test results, where students were able to construct simple yet correct sentences using the new vocabulary.

The findings of this study are in line with previous research. For instance, Salsabila (2022) emphasized that word-based games, such as Word Square and Scramble Sentence, help students discover and construct vocabulary effectively. Similarly, Nguyen (2021) found that vocabulary games provide meaningful contexts, promote active participation, and increase student motivation in learning. The present study extends these findings by showing that digital applications like Word Find can achieve similar results in secondary school contexts. Therefore, the discussion suggests that teachers should consider incorporating digital game-based learning applications into their vocabulary instruction. Such applications not only address students' difficulties in memorizing vocabulary but also create a more interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experience. This study proves that technology-enhanced learning tools can bridge the gap between traditional memorization methods and modern, engaging learning strategies.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the utilization of the Word Find application to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The results of data analysis revealed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary after the use of the application. The pre-test results showed that most students were in the *very poor* and *poor* categories, with an average score of 65.38. After the treatment using the Word Find application, the post-test results demonstrated a substantial improvement, with the mean score rising to 87.5. This placed the majority of students in the *good* category, and some even reached the *very good* category.

The improvement was evident across all aspects of vocabulary mastery, including meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and usage. Through the utilization of the Word Find application, students were not only able to recognize and spell words correctly but also practiced pronouncing them accurately and applying them in meaningful sentences. In conclusion, the utilization of the Word Find application proved to be an effective learning medium in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery. The findings suggest that the integration of word-based digital games can serve as an alternative medium to support English vocabulary learning, increase students' motivation, and encourage their active participation in classroom activities.

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